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**imagery analysis report**

## **Yugoslavian Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicle M-980 (S)**



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*WNINTEL*

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## YUGOSLAVIAN MECHANIZED INFANTRY COMBAT VEHICLE M-980 (S)

1. (S/WN) This report provides a summary of the initial deployment, the vehicle characteristics, and the development and production history of the Yugoslavian-produced M-980 mechanized infantry combat vehicle (MICV). A recent article in the Yugoslavian military magazine, *FRONT*, refers to this vehicle as the M-80;<sup>1</sup> however, this name has not been seen in other sources. Unit numbers referenced in this report are from the DIA ground order-of-battle.<sup>2</sup> This report includes four annotated photographs.

### SUMMARY

#### Deployment

2. (S/WN) Initial operational deployment of the M-980 evidently occurred in early 1982. [redacted] at least three M-980s on a train in Belgrade. [redacted] On the same train, tanks, whose turret numbers identified them as belonging to the 4th Tito Guards (TG) Tank Regiment of the 4th TG Infantry Division, were seen. [redacted] four M-980s in Beograd Tank Barracks 024. [redacted] Figure 1), the garrison for the 4th TG Tank Regiment. [redacted] at least 13 M-980s were seen in Beograd Army Barracks Banjica 082 [redacted] which houses the 131st TG Infantry Regiment of the 4th TG Infantry Division. Two M-980s were seen [redacted] with a newly formed combat unit in Skopje Army Barracks East 041 [redacted].

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3. (S/WN) The M-980 was reportedly troop tested in early 1981.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the M-980s with the 4th TG Infantry Division and Skopje were probably the first issued to line units. These deployments suggest that at least limited series production is in progress and that more of these MICVs should soon appear with active units.

#### Vehicle Characteristics

4. (U) The M-980 is a tracked, amphibious, 13-ton vehicle. [redacted] It has a one-man turret carrying a 20mm, dual-purpose main gun; a 7.62mm coaxial machine gun; and two antitank missiles. This vehicle provides chemical, biological, and radiological protection for the two-man crew and eight infantrymen. Each infantryman is provided with a weapons-firing port, similar to those of the Soviet BMPs. Troop access is via two rear doors and two top hatches (Figures 1 and 3).<sup>1</sup>

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5. (S/WN) The automotive components of the M-980 are based to some extent on the French AMX-10P MICV. The M-980's capabilities compare very favorably with both the AMX-10P and the Soviet BMP.<sup>5</sup>

6. (U) According to the *FRONT* article, the M-980 is powered by a front-mounted engine with a specific power of 18 kilowatts per ton. The steering mechanism is combined with a five-speed gearbox of Yugoslav design. The vehicle has a maximum road speed of 60 kilometers per

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hour and a maximum water speed of 7 kilometers per hour. A specific ground pressure of 0.64 kilogram per square centimeter should provide a good cross-country capability.<sup>1</sup>

### **Development and Production History**

7. (U) The M-980 was put on parade in 1975 and was to succeed the M-60 armored personnel carrier (APC). The M-60 is a nonamphibious APC that has a rather limited fighting ability since the crew must be exposed to operate its weapons and the infantrymen must dismount to fight. The M-980s, paraded in 1975, were powered by a Hispano-Suiza turbocharged, V-8 diesel engine made under license in Yugoslavia.<sup>5</sup> This engine apparently did not produce enough power for the Yugoslavs' purposes, and a new engine was obtained.<sup>1</sup>

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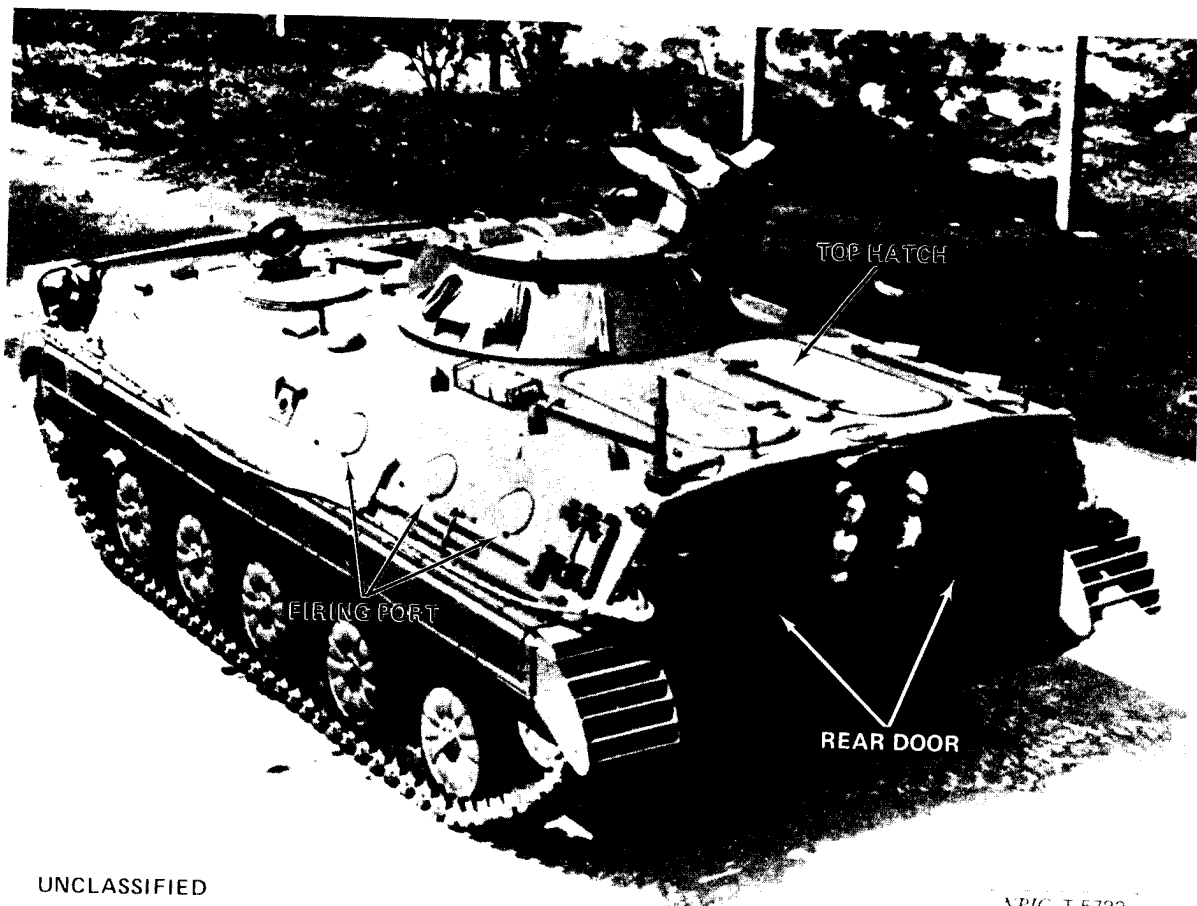
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8. (S/WN) A US military attache visited the Sarajevo Armored Vehicle and Engine Plant Famos [redacted] Figure 2) in March 1981. At that time, the M-980 assembly line was incomplete, but about 50 M-980s in various stages of assembly were present [redacted]. The attache was also shown from 30 to 40 Mercedes Benz diesel engines, allegedly made under license in Yugoslavia. A comparison of recent ground photographs of the M-980s with those taken in 1975 suggests that the Hispano-Suiza engine has been replaced by the larger, more powerful Mercedes Benz engine. The turret appears to be further to the rear of the vehicle, probably to allow room for the slightly larger engine. Also, both the engine access plate and the turbocharger exhaust pipe on the right side of the hull are larger (Figure 4).<sup>1-6</sup>

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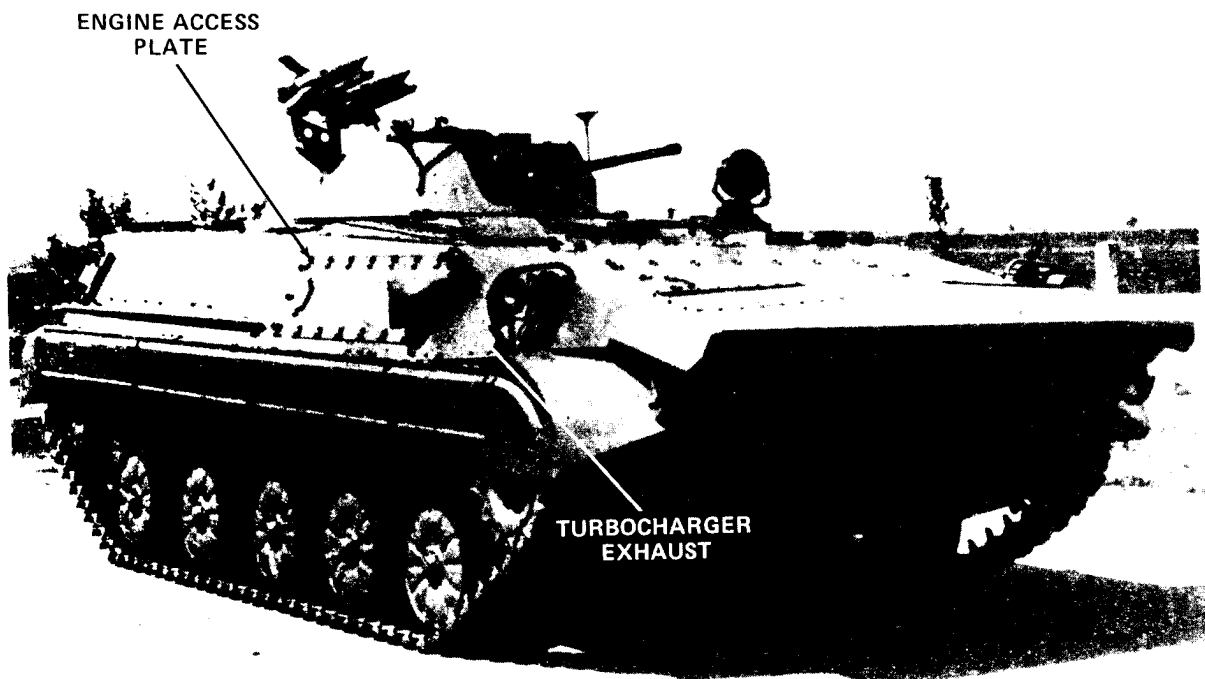
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FIGURE 3. M-980 MICV. Open-source photograph from Yugoslav magazine, FRONT, dated 6 August 1982.

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9. (S/WN) The addition of the M-980s to the Yugoslavian ground forces provides a significant improvement in their fighting capability. It is comparable to the BMP in troop-carrying capability, armor protection, and maneuverability. However, its weapons and fire-control arrangements differ significantly from the BMPs in that both guns can be used against air and ground targets and the antitank missiles can be fired and controlled independently of the guns.<sup>1</sup> This MICV can also be converted to other specialized uses. For example, at the Famos Plant, an antitank version with six missile launch rails has been seen.<sup>6</sup> In addition, because the M-980 is already listed in the arms catalog that Yugoslavia distributes to third world countries, its possible sale abroad could generate needed foreign revenue.<sup>7</sup>



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**FIGURE 4. M-980 MICV. Open-source photograph from Yugoslav magazine, FRONT, dated 6 August 1982.**

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